



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Agricultural  
Marketing  
Service

1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

## **2009 Farmers' Market Promotion Program Invitation for Application Reviewers**

### **Prospective FMPP Reviewer:**

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) Marketing Services Division (MSD) invites you to share your expertise in reviewing several project proposals for the 2009 Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP). The FMPP is a competitive grant program that began in 2006, with the goal of expanding domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community supported agriculture (CSA) programs, agritourism, and other direct producer-to-consumer marketing opportunities. FMPP grant funds are eligible to the following entities: agricultural cooperatives, producer networks, producer associations, local governments, non-profit corporations, public benefit corporations, economic development corporations, regional farmers' market authorities, and Tribal Governments. AMS is seeking participants in the FMPP application review process to assist us in identifying innovative, sustainable direct-marketing projects that can be shared with the public.

### **The Review Process:**

The FMPP application review process will begin in mid-May 2009.

- Reviewers will be provided applications to review in teams of two (2) or three (3) Reviewers. The FMPP Program Manager will identify a "Review Leader" for each review team. The Review Leader will have the additional responsibilities of leading and facilitating a review consensus for the team during an Official FMPP Reviewer Meeting.
- Reviewers will have one month to review 20-30 proposals, each consisting of 10-12 pages.
- The criteria for evaluating project proposals have been pre-determined. Each criterion has a specific value, which will be provided during the Reviewer's orientation and training session(s).
- An Official FMPP Reviewer Meeting will be held at a location in Washington, DC, in late June or early July 2009. This meeting will provide Reviewers with the opportunity to convene in small groups to discuss the selected proposals and reach consensus. It will also allow for subsequent meetings with all Reviewers to further discuss the merits of the proposals and determine those most deserving of FMPP funding.

- Reviewers will be reimbursed for transportation, meals, and incidental expenses to participate in the FMPP review process. Reviewers located outside of the immediate District of Columbia metropolitan commuting area will also be reimbursed for lodging expenses.

### **Reviewer Requirements:**

AMS, MSD is seeking individuals whose fairness, objectivity, and enthusiasm are paramount in wanting to take part in this process:

- 1) Reviewers will include Federal employees and 'peer' State and local community representatives from agricultural cooperatives, producer networks, producer associations, local governments, non-profit corporations, public benefit corporations, economic development corporations, regional farmers' market authorities, and Tribal Governments.
- 2) Prospective peer Reviewers are expected to have a general knowledge of the importance and operational aspects of farmers markets, roadside stands, CSAs, agritourism, electronic benefit transfers projects, and other direct marketing businesses. The individual will utilize their knowledge and expertise to review project proposals and provide scores and written comments about projects from eligible entities that are applying for FMPP grants.
- 3) The review process for Federal grants through FMPP requires that the Reviewer be:
  - a. Objective and impartial
  - b. Free of organization, project, or racial biases
  - c. Free of conflicts of interest
  - d. Able to work effectively in groups
  - e. Able to maintain confidentiality
  - f. Available to serve as a Reviewer during the months of May thru early July 2009
  - g. Available to travel to Washington, DC, in late June or early July 2009, for the Official FMPP Reviewer Meeting
- 4) Prospective Reviewers should be knowledgeable of how to objectively review and assess proposals in order to effectively evaluate project objectives, work plans, and expected results in determining the potential for project success.
- 5) Prospective and participating FMPP Reviewers must agree to the Reviewer confidentiality requirements. This confidentiality agreement requires that Reviewers refrain from sharing with ANYONE the discussions, comments, scores, recommendations, selections, or non-selections made before, during, or after the FMPP application review process.

### **How to Indicate You Want to Serve:**

Prospective Reviewers:

- 6) Agree to the requirements cited in the pages above.

- 7) Should call one of the FMPP grant program team staff members below to discuss your participation:

**Carmen Humphrey**, Branch Chief

**Linda Browne**, Agricultural Marketing Specialist

**Karl Hacker**, Economist

**Ricardo Krajewski**, Economist

Marketing Grants and Technical Assistance Branch

Marketing Services Division

Transportation and Marketing Programs, AMS, USDA

**202/720-8317**

**Reviewer Selection and Notification:**

- 8) There is no preference for the selection of Reviewers based on race, ethnic identity, religion, age, or organization or institutional affiliation. AMS/FMPP will maintain confidentiality and safeguard personal information concerning the individuals serving as FMPP Reviewers, including, but not limited to, their names, credentials, affiliations, and any financial assistance received as Reviewers for FMPP.
- 9) **Prospective Reviewers will not be selected if they or their organization have submitted an application for FMPP grant funding for the 2009 grant program year.**
- 10) FMPP team staff will contact those selected to participate in the review process.

We appreciate your interest and look forward to hearing from you.

FMPP Grant Team